



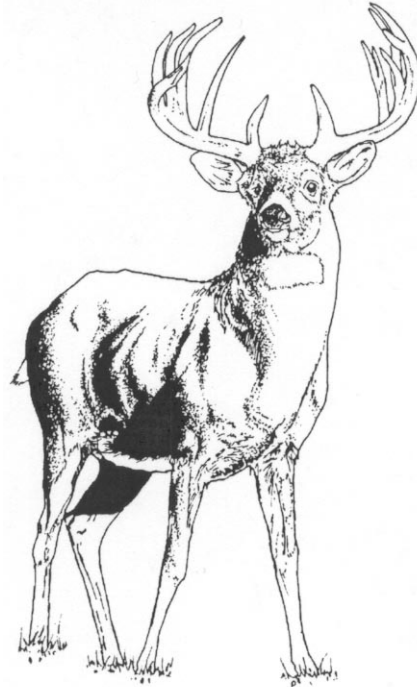
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Results of the 2004-2005 Illinois Deer Hunter Survey



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November 22, 2005

RESULTS OF THE
ILLINOIS DEER HUNTER SURVEY
(FOREST GAME HUNTER SURVEY)
2004-2005 SEASON

JOB COMPLETION REPORT

WILDLIFE HARVEST AND
HUMAN DIMENSIONS RESEARCH PROGRAM

STATE OF ILLINOIS

PROJECT NUMBER: W-112-R-14
STUDY 101
JOB NO. 101.5

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Illinois Natural History Survey
Champaign, IL
November 22, 2005

Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration
W-112-R-14

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ABSTRACT

A random sample of 3,000 potential deer hunters was selected from 2003 Illinois Habitat Stamp stubs. An 8-page questionnaire was mailed to the selected sample, 222 of which were undeliverable. We received 2,006 returned questionnaires (72%), which included 1,990 useable responses. Ninety-two percent of respondents reported purchasing one or more permits to hunt deer in Illinois during the 2004-2005 season. Most Illinois deer hunters, both firearm and archery felt the number of deer and resident deer hunters in their hunting areas were About Right, but that there were Too Many non-resident deer hunters. The majority of archery and firearm deer hunters rated their 2004-2005 Illinois deer hunting experience as Good, and comparable to their most enjoyable hunt in past years. Hunters were generally satisfied with the Illinois deer management/hunting program, and their 2004-2005 deer hunt was a good experience. We examined attitudes related to Nature Preserve deer hunts, the new electronic license/permit and remote (phone/internet) deer harvest reporting systems, deer harvest pins, non-resident permit fees, and deer hunting weapons. We profiled the personal characteristics of Illinois deer hunters.

OBJECTIVE

To survey 1 group of forest game (deer, turkey, squirrel, or other) hunters annually to determine their activities, harvests, characteristics, attitudes, and opinions in Illinois.

METHODS

Potential deer hunters were selected for this survey by a systematic random sampling of individuals who indicated, on 2003 Illinois Habitat Stamp stubs, they had hunted deer the past season. Participants were mailed a self-administered, 8-page questionnaire accompanied with cover letter and return envelope on April 11, 2005 (Appendices A and B). Of the 3,000 questionnaires mailed, 222 could not be delivered, leaving a potential useable sample of 2,778 deer hunters. This mailing was followed 2 weeks later with a thank you/reminder postcard to nonrespondents. On May 19, a second questionnaire, cover letter, and return envelope were mailed

to nonrespondents. The second mailing was followed 2 weeks later with a postcard thank you/reminder. Methods for survey questionnaire mailings and follow-up reminders followed those of Miller et al. (1999). Data was coded, entered, and analyzed using SPSS 11.5.

SEASON LENGTHS AND BAG LIMITS

The 2004-2005 Illinois deer season was divided into 4 components – Archery Season, Regular Firearm Season, Muzzleloader-Only Season, and Late Winter Firearm Season. Within each component, multiple permit types were available to residents. Archery hunters could purchase a single either-sex permit through the mail for \$15, or a combination tag costing \$26 and allowing the harvest of 1 either-sex deer and 1 antlerless-only deer. Resident firearm, muzzleloader, and late-winter firearm permits cost \$15 each, were county or site specific, and designated as either-sex or antlerless-only. Ninety-nine counties were open during the 10 days encompassed by the firearm and muzzleloader hunting seasons (open 7 days each). The Regular Firearm Season (shotgun, muzzleloader, and handgun) was held November 19-21 and December 2-5. The Muzzleloader-Only season was December 10-12 and shared the second 4 days of the Regular Firearm Season. For the 2005 season, the 3-day late-winter deer season (antlerless deer only) was expanded to 43 counties and regulations were liberalized to allow the use of shotguns and muzzleloaders, in addition to handguns. The Late-Winter Season was held January 14-16, 2005. Free Landowner-Tenant permits were available to eligible residents for archery and/or firearm seasons and allowed permit holders to hunt on their own land in the designated county.

RESULTS

Deer Hunting in Illinois

We received 2,006 total responses and 1,990 useable responses to the 2004-2005 Illinois Deer Hunter Survey, for a response rate of 72%. Ninety-two percent of respondents reported purchasing one or more permits to hunt deer in Illinois during the 2004-2005 season. On average, hunters purchased more archery

permits than firearm permits, and regular archery permits provided over twice as many days afield as any other permit type (Table 1).

The majority of Illinois deer hunters rated the quality of the IDNR deer management program as Good (54%), with 21% rating the program as Fair, and 15% as Excellent (Table 2). The majority of firearm deer hunters (63.0%) felt the number of deer in the county they hunted in was About Right, and considering just those that had permits last year, an even larger percentage (68%) were satisfied with the number of deer in their hunting area (Table 3). A plurality of archery hunters (44.3%) were also satisfied with the number of deer in the county they hunted. Last year's archery permit holders felt even more strongly that the number of deer in their hunting area was About Right (Table 3).

Majorities of firearm deer hunters, including those who have hunted deer anytime in the past, felt the number of deer hunters in the area they hunted most were About Right (Table 4). Of last year's archery permit holders, 70.5% rated the number of deer hunters in their hunting area as About Right. Pluralities of both last year's firearm and archery permit holders felt there were Too Many non-resident deer hunters, but another large percentage of each group had No Opinion (Table 5).

Considering only deer hunters who held permits in 2004-2005, pluralities of firearm and archery deer hunters rated their Illinois hunting experience as Good (46.3% and 44.7%, respectively), with only 2.1% of firearm and 4.4% of archery hunters indicating they Didn't Hunt (Table 6). The majority of both firearm and archery hunters rated their 2004-2005 Illinois deer hunting experience as About The Same as their most enjoyable Illinois deer hunt (Table 7). Generally, non-consumptive benefits of deer hunting were most important to deer hunters, including "Spending time out-of-doors", "Observing wildlife", "Getting away, solitude", and "Seeing deer" (Table 8). Preparing for the hunt and harvesting deer were of intermediate importance, and "Visiting the local deer check station" and "Getting a deer pin for harvesting a deer" were considered of lesser importance.

The majority of deer hunters felt the dates for the Late Winter Firearm season were About Right (67.3%, n = 1,225), and 54.6% (n = 1,030) were unsupportive of moving the season from mid-January to mid-October.

The majority of deer hunters (77.6%, n = 1,473) have never participated in the Late Winter season. The most frequent reasons given for never having participated were “The weather” (26.8%), “No access to hunting areas” (23.0%), and “Already put away my hunting equipment” (18.5%). The fear that “Too many antlerless bucks may be harvested” was the least frequent response given (14.1%).

Special Deer Hunts at Nature Preserves

Most deer hunters (61.1%, n = 1,186) were aware of deer hunts held on Nature Preserves. Only 7.6% (n = 148) of those surveyed had participated in a Nature Preserve deer hunt, with 1.7% unsure whether they had participated. When given a list of potential scenarios for Nature Preserve hunts, significant numbers of deer hunters indicated there were options they would try, with the possibility of harvesting a buck after harvesting an antlerless deer being the most popular (Table 9). Antlerless hunts held during the regular firearm season were the least popular options.

Licenses, Permits, and Deer Check

A plurality of deer hunters (39.2%, n = 774) felt Good about using a remote deer harvest reporting system to replace check stations, but large percentages of deer hunters were Undecided about the change (29.9%) or didn't like it (26.2%). Approximately 81% (n = 1,557) of deer hunters reported they would report their harvest using telephone compared to 19% that would use the internet.

Hunters were informed about the difficulty in distributing deer harvest pins under the new remote harvest reporting system, and asked their opinions about deer pin distribution. A majority of hunters (64.7%) strongly disagreed or disagreed with the DNR's proposal to discontinue issuing deer harvest pins to successful hunters (Table 10). However, only 17.9% agreed that DNR should continue to provide deer pins if their distribution would mean other wildlife programs would be cut. Similar percentages of hunters either would and would not be willing to pay to receive a deer harvest pin.

A plurality of deer hunters (46.3%, n = 910) were Undecided about the new electronic licensing and permit application system, but 32.9% felt Good about the proposed system. The majority of hunters reported they typically purchase their Illinois hunting license at a large vendor such as K-Mart or Walmart (54.0%, n = 1,045), or at a local vendor (34.1%). Only 6.3% reported they typically purchased their license over the internet. Under the proposed electronic permit application system, the majority of hunters (63.2%, n = 1,239) reported they would most likely apply at a license vendor, compared to 36.8% that would apply over the internet.

Seventy-one percent of deer hunters (n = 1,385) supported increasing non-resident deer permit fees (archery and firearm). When presented with the possibility that other states might respond by charging Illinois residents more to hunt in their state, an even larger percentage (73.5%, n = 1,433) of deer hunters supported increasing non-resident permit fees.

Equipment

Approximately 60% (n = 1,182) of deer hunters were familiar with black powder cartridge rifles, but only 14.5% (287) actually owned one. Few deer hunters (11.9%, n = 236) used a handgun during the 2004-2005 regular firearm deer season, but 58.5% (n = 1,156) of deer hunters support the use of handguns during the regular firearm season. Technological advances in archery equipment were supported by 64.8% (n = 1,278) of deer hunters, with 29.1% of hunters having No Opinion.

A plurality of archery deer hunters (45.0% Agree and 29.1% Strongly Agree) supported the use of compound bows with >65% letoff (Table 11). Archery hunters also supported the use of bows with $\geq 80\%$ letoff but to a lesser extent. Most archery hunters Strongly Disagreed (31.0%) or Disagreed (25.5%) that archery hunters should be allowed to hunt during the regular firearm deer season. Hunters also felt use of mechanical broadheads should be restricted to hunters using bows with enough kinetic energy to make the broadhead function properly.

Archery deer hunters generally supported the use of crossbows by handicapped hunters or hunters ≥ 65 years of age, but did not support legalizing crossbows for youth archery hunters under 18. Neither archery or firearm hunters supported allowing crossbow use during the firearm deer season.

Firearm hunters were somewhat divided over whether modern rifles were too dangerous for deer hunting in Illinois, with a plurality agreeing that rifles are too dangerous (Table 11). However, they supported the use of smokeless powders and in-line muzzleloaders, which they generally agreed both allowed ballistics similar to modern rifles. Majorities of firearm deer hunters (51.4%) supported the use of black powder cartridge rifles during the firearm season, and disagreed (52.1%) with the statement that muzzleloader season should be limited to “primitive” weapons.

Sixty-seven percent of firearm deer hunters ($n = 1,237$) and 88.4% of archery hunters ($n = 1,187$) hunt from an elevated stand. A plurality of deer hunters (37.6%) reported Always using a safety belt or harness when hunting from a deer stand, whereas 20.6% said they Never use a safety belt or harness (Table 12). Only 12.1% ($n = 239$) of deer hunters reported using trail cameras to scout their deer hunting areas. A majority of deer hunters (68.1%, $n = 1,345$) take hand-held radios or a cell phone with them while deer hunting.

General Information

The average Illinois deer hunter was 47 years old ($n = 1,978$, range 12-89 years) at the end of the last 2004-2005 deer season on January 16, 2005, had hunted deer in Illinois for 19 years ($n = 1,968$, range 1-65), and was male (95.8%, $n = 1,906$). Only 6.6% ($n = 130$) of Illinois deer hunters hunted in another state during the 2004-2005 season. The states they hunted, and the number that hunted in each state, is presented in Table 13. Seventy percent of Illinois deer hunters ($n = 1,383$) collect Illinois deer harvest pins. Over half (51%, $n = 1,008$) of deer hunters reported that either themselves or someone in their house plays video deer hunting games. County of residence of the hunters surveyed is presented in Table 14.

REFERENCES

Miller, C.A., L.K. Campbell and K.D. Caldwell. 1999. 1998-99 Illinois Hunter Harvest Survey Report. Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Project W-112-R-8, Job 1, Job Completion Report 77pp.

Table 1. Permits held, days hunted, and deer harvested by survey respondents during the 2004-2005 deer season in Illinois.

	Permits (n = 1,389)		Days Hunted (n = 1,386)		Deer Harvested (n = 1,344)	
	Total	Average /Hunter	Total	Average /Hunter	Total	Average /Hunter
Regular Firearm	2,059	1.5	5,917	4.3	988	0.7
Muzzleloader Only	233	1.2	520	2.7	79	0.4
Late Winter Firearm	208	1.0	371	1.8	70	0.4
Landowner/Tenant Archery	354	1.8	2,250	11.4	80	0.5
Landowner/Tenant Firearm	446	1.8	1,221	4.9	197	0.8
Archery	1,504	2.0	16,269	21.2	605	0.8

Table 2. Satisfaction of Illinois deer hunters with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' deer management program.

	n	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Undecided
All Deer Hunters	1,887	14.5%	54.2	21.4	4.5	5.5
Regular Firearm	1,377	15.8%	56.0	19.4	3.8	5.0
Muzzleloader Only	190	14.7%	51.6	25.8	5.3	2.6
Late Winter Firearm	204	14.7%	54.4	24.0	2.9	3.9
Landowner/Tenant Archery	197	10.2%	45.7	29.4	8.1	6.6
Landowner/Tenant Firearm	248	8.9%	45.6	28.6	8.1	8.9
Archery	760	14.5%	55.3	22.1	3.4	4.7

Table 3. What is your opinion of the number of DEER in the county where you hunt most?

County where you...	n	Too Low	About Right	Too High	No Opinion
Firearm hunt most	1,914	9.7%	63.0	16.4	11.0
Firearm hunt most ^a	1,648	10.4%	68.0	17.5	4.1
Archery hunt most	1,914	6.7%	44.3	10.6	38.5
Archery hunt most ^b	939	9.9%	68.8	14.8	6.5

^a Only hunters that had firearm, muzzleloader, late-winter firearm, or landowner/tenant firearm permits during the 2004-2005 season.

^b Only hunters that had an archery or landowner/tenant archery permit during the 2004-2005 season.

Table 4. What is your opinion of the number of deer HUNTERS in the county where you hunt most?

County where you...	n	Too Low	About Right	Too High	Dangerously Crowded	No Opinion
Firearm hunt most	1,915	4.0%	61.6	19.4	4.1	10.9
Firearm hunt most ^a	1,648	4.1%	66.6	20.8	3.8	4.7
Archery hunt most	1,915	3.0%	48.0	10.2	1.1	37.7
Archery hunt most ^b	940	3.5%	70.5	16.6	1.7	7.7

^a Only hunters that had firearm, muzzleloader, late-winter firearm, or landowner/tenant firearm permits during the 2004-2005 season.

^b Only hunters that had an archery or landowner/tenant archery permit during the 2004-2005 season.

Table 5. What is your opinion of the number of non-resident deer hunters in Illinois? (Includes deer hunters that had permits in 2004-2005 and/or in previous seasons)

County where you...	n	Too Few	About Right	Too Many	No Opinion
Firearm hunt most	1,914	3.7%	19.5	40.3	36.5
Firearm hunt most ^a	1,647	3.8%	20.8	42.0	33.5
Archery hunt most	1,914	3.8%	16.7	27.3	52.3
Archery hunt most ^b	939	4.2%	24.6	37.7	33.5

^a Only hunters that had firearm, muzzleloader, late-winter firearm, or landowner/tenant firearm permits during the 2004-2005 season.

^b Only hunters that had an archery or landowner/tenant archery permit during the 2004-2005 season.

Table 6. How would you rate your deer hunting experience in Illinois during the 2004-2005 season? (Includes only those that had one or more permits for the 2004-2005 seasons)

	n	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Undecided	Didn't Hunt
For firearm	1,645	19.6%	46.3	22.2	8.8	1.1	2.1
For archery	939	20.3%	44.7	21.1	7.3	2.1	4.4

Table 7. How did your deer hunting experience in 2004-2005 compare with your most enjoyable Illinois deer hunt in previous years? (Includes only those that had one or more permits for the 2004-2005 seasons)

	n	2004-2005 Was My Most Enjoyable Season	Less Enjoyable	About The Same
For firearm	1,613	10.9	30.2	58.9
For archery	905	15.5	26.9	57.7

Table 8. How IMPORTANT to you are each of the following to your enjoyment of deer hunting in Illinois?

	n	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
Spending time in deer camp with family and/or friends	1,842	18.2%	10.2	20.7	30.9	20.0
Seeing deer	1,887	0.4%	1.4	13.4	44.9	39.9
Preparing for the hunt, including scouting and target shooting	1,879	2.2%	7.9	25.6	41.4	22.9
Visiting the local deer check station	1,871	27.8%	22.7	28.0	14.4	7.1
Spending time out-of-doors	1,888	0.6%	0.8	6.6	33.8	58.1
Getting away, solitude	1,880	1.9%	3.7	14.6	33.4	46.4
Observing wildlife	1,877	0.7%	0.6	8.2	37.3	53.2
Getting a deer pin for harvesting a deer	1,869	22.6%	17.3	25.3	17.3	17.4
Harvesting a deer	1,889	4.3%	8.9	34.8	27.3	24.7
Harvesting a buck	1,886	14.1%	14.8	33.7	19.2	18.2

Table 9. Would you consider participating in a special **antlerless-only** deer hunt on a Nature Preserve under each of the following scenarios?

	n	Yes	No	Maybe
An antlerless-only firearm hunt is held during the regular firearm deer season (requiring a permit acquired through the regular firearm permit draw).	1,911	24.3%	52.9	22.9
An antlerless-only firearm hunt is held outside the regular firearm deer season (requiring a permit acquired through the regular firearm permit draw).	1,912	44.1%	32.1	23.8
1-day, antlerless-only, standby deer permits costing \$5.00 are issued after 5am each morning at some Nature Preserves during the regular firearm deer season.	1,906	28.9%	48.2	22.9
Regular archery season dates and regulations apply on Nature Preserves but only antlerless deer may be harvested.	1,883	40.9%	38.6	20.6
Archery-only hunting for antlerless deer is allowed on Nature Preserves during the regular firearm season.	1,876	28.9%	55.8	15.2
One archery permit allows you to harvest an unlimited number of antlerless deer on a Nature Preserve.	1,879	33.7%	50.3	15.9
You are allowed to harvest a buck on a Nature Preserve, but only after you have harvested an antlerless deer at the site.	1,907	55.0%	25.2	19.8

Table 10. Under the new “remote” deer harvest reporting system, deer harvest pins would have to be distributed by mail to successful hunters. Considering that mail distribution will be difficult and expensive, please tell us how you feel about the following statements.

	n	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
DNR should stop issuing deer harvest pins to successful hunters	1,966	41.9%	22.8	14.7	12.8	7.8
DNR should continue to provide deer pins to successful deer hunters even if it means cutting other wildlife programs	1,964	36.5%	27.1	18.5	9.5	8.4
I would be willing to pay to receive an Illinois deer harvest pin	1,963	26.5%	17.1	19.1	25.2	12.1

Table 11. Illinois deer hunter responses to statements about hunting equipment.

ARCHERY EQUIPMENT ^a	n	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
I support the use of compound bows with greater than 65% letoff.	932	4.9	5.6	15.5	45.0	29.1
Archery hunters should be allowed to hunt during the regular firearm season.	935	31.0	25.5	8.4	19.1	15.9
Recent technological advances in archery equipment have diminished the sport.	933	31.4	42.7	15.3	7.6	3.0
Light projecting (laser) sights should be allowed for bow hunting in Illinois.	934	25.4	18.1	25.8	23.0	7.7
Use of mechanical broadheads should be restricted to hunters using bows that provide enough kinetic energy to make the broadhead function properly.	936	6.1	5.7	15.4	42.1	30.8
I support the use of compound bows with 80% or greater letoff.	934	8.0	13.1	26.7	32.7	19.6
CROSSBOWS (archery hunters) ^a	n	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Handicapped hunters are the only ones that should be allowed to use crossbows.	932	9.7	17.1	9.7	30.4	33.3
Crossbows should be legalized for archery deer hunting.	930	35.4	24.4	12.7	16.6	11.0
Crossbows should not be considered archery equipment.	931	15.0	28.6	19.5	20.7	16.1
Crossbow use should be allowed during the firearm deer season.	933	32.5	27.7	14.1	17.4	8.4
Crossbows should be legal for hunters 65 years of age or older.	933	7.6	7.9	15.1	43.3	26.0
Crossbows should be legal for youth archery hunters under 18 years of age.	934	39.7	34.9	10.7	8.9	5.8
Crossbow use should be allowed only for special hunts and/or in special hunt areas.	930	20.9	31.8	28.1	13.0	6.2

Table 11 – continued. Illinois deer hunter responses to statements about hunting equipment.

CROSSBOWS (firearm hunters) ^b	n	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Handicapped hunters are the only ones that should be allowed to use crossbows.	1,611	10.9	18.8	11.4	31.7	27.2
Crossbows should be legalized for archery deer hunting.	1,610	28.3	24.9	14.2	20.7	11.9
Crossbows should not be considered archery equipment.	1,608	14.9	29.2	22.5	21.0	12.4
Crossbow use should be allowed during the firearm deer season.	1,611	40.0	29.7	12.5	11.7	6.1
Crossbows should be legal for hunters 65 years of age or older.	1,614	8.4	8.6	17.8	41.9	23.3
Crossbows should be legal for youth archery hunters under 18 years of age.	1,611	37.8	33.3	15.5	8.5	5.0
Crossbow use should be allowed only for special hunts and/or in special hunt areas.	1,610	20.9	30.9	29.1	14.2	4.8
FIREARMS ^b	n	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
“Smokeless” powders that can be used in modern muzzleloaders offer ballistic performance similar to modern rifles.	1,609	3.4	9.8	43.3	36.7	6.7
Modern rifles are too dangerous for deer hunting in Illinois.	1,632	13.7	26.3	13.7	27.1	19.1
Hunters in Illinois should be allowed to use black powder cartridge rifles to hunt deer during the regular firearm season.	1,628	8.5	14.4	25.7	38.0	13.4
Muzzleloader hunters should be allowed to use smokeless powder.	1,622	5.2	11.4	32.9	40.0	10.5
The muzzleloader-only season should be limited to “primitive” weapons with an external hammer, iron sights, and using patched round balls.	1,623	20.2	31.9	27.2	14.3	6.5
In-line muzzleloaders are more similar to modern rifles than to flintlock and percussion muzzleloaders.	1,621	2.6	8.7	34.2	43.9	10.6
Scopes should not be permitted during the muzzleloader-only deer season.	1,628	25.2	35.7	20.1	13.2	5.8

^a Includes only the opinions of deer hunters that held one or more Illinois archery deer permit during the 2004-2005 season.

^b Includes only the opinions of deer hunters that held one or more Illinois firearm deer permits (regular firearm, muzzleloader-only, late-winter firearm, or landowner/tenant firearm) during the 2004-2005 season.

Table 12. How often do you use a safety belt or harness when hunting from a deer stand? (n = 1,869)

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Always
20.6%	12.1	13.2	16.5	37.6

Table 13. Other states Illinois deer hunters visited to hunt deer, and the number of hunters that visited each state.

State	n
Alabama	1
Alaska	2
Arkansas	2
Colorado	6
Idaho	1
Indiana	5
Iowa	15
Kansas	4
Kentucky	8
Maine	1
Michigan	10
Minnesota	4
Mississippi	3
Missouri	20
Montana	3
Nebraska	1
New Jersey	1
New Mexico	2
North Dakota	3
Ohio	1
Tennessee	4
Texas	2
Utah	1
Virginia	3
West Virginia	1
Wisconsin	41
Wyoming	7

Table 14. County of residence for respondents to the 2004-2005 Illinois Deer Hunter Survey. (n = 1,990)

County	Number of residents	County	Number of residents	County	Number of residents
Adams	58	Henderson	7	Moultrie	3
Alexander	7	Henry	27	Ogle	24
Bond	7	Iroquois	24	Peoria	23
Boone	3	Jackson	11	Perry	17
Brown	6	Jasper	10	Piatt	9
Bureau	20	Jefferson	18	Pike	6
Calhoun	9	Jersey	1	Pope	9
Carroll	21	JoDaviess	22	Pulaski	8
Cass	10	Johnson	4	Putnam	7
Champaign	30	Kane	29	Randolph	24
Christian	27	Kankakee	22	Richland	19
Clark	3	Kendall	9	Rock Island	36
Clay	16	Knox	17	St. Clair	79
Clinton	25	Lake	34	Saline	7
Coles	17	LaSalle	54	Sangamon	53
Cook	84	Lawrence	16	Schuyler	3
Crawford	16	Lee	27	Scott	6
Cumberland	6	Livingston	14	Shelby	19
DeKalb	20	Logan	11	Stark	3
DeWitt	12	McDonough	14	Stephenson	27
Douglas	12	McHenry	27	Tazewell	50
DuPage	22	McLean	17	Union	15
Edgar	9	Macon	42	Vermilion	41
Edwards	6	Macoupin	35	Wabash	4
Effingham	18	Madison	75	Warren	2
Fayette	23	Marion	20	Washington	18
Ford	8	Marshall	8	Wayne	14
Franklin	21	Mason	5	White	12
Fulton	24	Massac	12	Whiteside	23
Gallatin	2	Menard	15	Will	50
Greene	9	Mercer	20	Williamson	24
Grundy	11	Monroe	40	Winnebago	34
Hamilton	6	Montgomery	12	Woodford	13
Hancock	14	Morgan	27		

Dear Illinois Deer Hunter,

You are one of a select group of Illinois hunters asked to provide information about your deer hunting activities during the 2004-2005 hunting season and your opinions related to deer hunting in Illinois. Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it to us as soon as possible. The information you and other selected hunters furnish our biologists is vital to help guide deer management programs that optimize hunting opportunities, maintain or improve hunter satisfaction, and allow for effective management.

This survey is limited to those hunters selected. Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire, and provide your opinions on the appropriate questions even if you did not hunt during the 2004-2005 season. A postage-paid envelope is provided for returning the questionnaire to us.

If you are interested in the summary results of this survey, or other hunter and trapper surveys, please visit <http://www.inhs.uiuc.edu/cwe/hd/>. For more information about wildlife in Illinois, visit <http://dnr.state.il.us/orc/wildliferesources/>.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

William L. Anderson
Wildlife Harvest and Human Dimensions Research Program

Dear Illinois Deer Hunter,

As one of a select group of Illinois hunters, you have been asked to provide information about deer hunting in Illinois. We recently mailed you a survey questionnaire regarding your hunting experiences during the 2004-2005 season and your opinions related to deer hunting. We have not received your completed questionnaire at this time. Perhaps you recently mailed the questionnaire and it has not yet arrived in our office. If so, we thank you.

If you have not returned your completed questionnaire to us, please do so as soon as possible. Another copy of the questionnaire is enclosed. The information you and other selected hunters furnish our biologists is vital to help guide deer management programs that optimize hunting opportunities, maintain or improve hunter satisfaction, and allow for effective management.

This survey is limited to those hunters selected. Please take a few minutes to complete the enclosed questionnaire, and provide your opinions on the appropriate questions even if you did not hunt during the 2004-2005 season. A postage-paid envelope is provided for you to return the questionnaire to us.

If you have questions, please call us at (217) 244-5121. Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

William L. Anderson
Wildlife Harvest and Human Dimensions Research Program

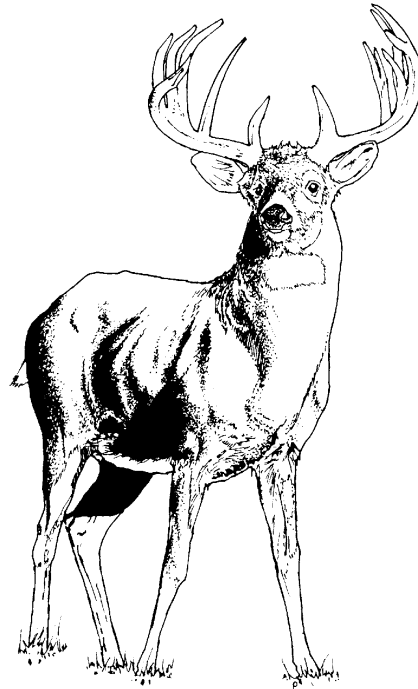


Dear Illinois Hunter,

You have been selected to participate in the Illinois Deer Hunter Survey. A survey questionnaire was recently mailed to you. We have not received your questionnaire at this time. **If you have returned the questionnaire, we thank you and please disregard this reminder. If you have not returned the questionnaire, please do so as soon as possible.** Your input is very important!

Thank you for your cooperation.

Illinois Deer Hunter Survey



Your comments are welcome but please write them on a separate sheet of paper to receive proper attention.

2004 – 2005 Season

ALL RESPONSES ARE CONFIDENTIAL

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!

Postage-paid return envelope provided



Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Division of Wildlife Resources
and the
Illinois Natural History Survey



The Department of Natural Resources is requesting disclosure of information that is necessary to accomplish the statutory purpose as outlined under the Illinois Compiled Statutes, The Wildlife Code, Chapter 520. Disclosure of information is voluntary.

This study is funded by the federal Wildlife Restoration fund through your purchase of hunting arms and ammunition.

Section 1. Deer Hunting in Illinois. Please answer the following with respect to deer hunting in Illinois.

1. Did you purchase one or more permits to hunt deer in Illinois during the 2004-2005 seasons?

_____ Yes _____ No (Please go to **Section 2**)

- 1a. What type of permits did you have, how many days did you hunt, and how many deer did you harvest using each type of permit during the 2004-2005 deer seasons? (Count part of a day as a whole day)

Permit type	Number of Permits	Number of Days Hunted	Deer Harvested	County Hunted <u>Most</u> Often
Regular Firearm	_____	_____	_____	_____
Muzzleloader Only	_____	_____	_____	_____
Late Winter Firearm	_____	_____	_____	_____
Landowner/Tenant Archery	_____ ^a	_____	_____	_____
Landowner/Tenant Firearm	_____ ^a	_____	_____	_____
Archery	_____ ^a	_____	_____	_____

^a Count as 1 permit for each deer allowed.

2. How would you rate the Department of Natural Resources' deer management program (Circle one)?

Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Undecided
1	2	3	4	5

3. What is your opinion of the number of DEER in the county where you hunt most? (Circle the number for the appropriate response in each row)

County where you...	Too Low	About Right	Too High	No Opinion
Firearm hunt most	1	2	3	4
Archery hunt most	1	2	3	4

4. What is your opinion of the number of deer HUNTERS in the county where you hunt most? (Circle the number for the appropriate response in each row)

County where you...	Too Low	About Right	Too High	Dangerously Crowded	No Opinion
Firearm hunt most	1	2	3	4	5
Archery hunt most	1	2	3	4	5

5. What is your opinion of the number of non-resident deer hunters in Illinois? (Circle the number for the appropriate response in each row)

	Too few	About right	Too many	No opinion
For firearm	1	2	3	4
For archery	1	2	3	4

6. How would you rate your deer hunting experience in Illinois during the 2004-2005 season? (Circle the number for the appropriate response in each row)

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Undecided	Didn't hunt
For firearm	1	2	3	4	5	6
For archery	1	2	3	4	5	6

7. How did your deer hunting experience in 2004-2005 compare with your most enjoyable Illinois deer hunt in previous years? (Circle the number for the appropriate response in each row)

	2004-2005 was my most enjoyable season	Less enjoyable	About the same
For firearm	1	2	3
For archery	1	2	3

8. How IMPORTANT to you are each of the following to your enjoyment of deer hunting in Illinois? (Circle the number of the appropriate response for each activity)

	Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
Spending time in deer camp with family and/or friends	1	2	3	4	5
Seeing deer	1	2	3	4	5
Preparing for the hunt, including scouting and target shooting	1	2	3	4	5
Visiting the local deer check station	1	2	3	4	5
Spending time out-of-doors	1	2	3	4	5
Getting away, solitude	1	2	3	4	5
Observing wildlife	1	2	3	4	5
Getting a deer pin for harvesting a deer	1	2	3	4	5
Harvesting a deer	1	2	3	4	5
Harvesting a buck	1	2	3	4	5

9. What is your opinion of the dates for the Late Winter Firearm season (previously called handgun season) held in mid-January?

_____ 1) Too early _____ 2) Too late _____ 3) About right

10. How do you feel about moving the dates of the "late winter" firearm season from mid-January to mid-October?

_____ Supportive _____ Unsupportive _____ No opinion

11. Have you ever participated in the Late Winter Firearm season held in mid-January?

_____ Yes (Please go to **Section 2**) _____ No

11a. If “No”, please give us your primary reason for not participating in the Late Winter Firearm season?
(Check only one)

- _____ 1) No access to hunting areas in open counties
 _____ 2) The weather is usually not suitable for me to go deer hunting
 _____ 3) I am concerned too many antlerless bucks may be harvested in mid-January
 _____ 4) I have already put away my hunting equipment by that time
 _____ 5) I would consider participating if I had the opportunity to harvest a buck

Section 2. Special Deer Hunts at Nature Preserves. Growing deer populations over the past several years have necessitated special hunts on DNR sites not previously open to hunting, such as in designated Nature Preserves. Regulations vary depending on the site but most of these hunts restrict harvest to antlerless deer only. Please answer the following questions about your knowledge and opinions regarding these hunts.

1. Were you aware of special deer hunts held on Nature Preserves?

_____ Yes _____ No

2. Have you ever participated in a deer hunt on a designated Nature Preserve?

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Not sure

3. Would you consider participating in a special **antlerless-only** deer hunt on a Nature Preserve under each of the following scenarios? (Circle the number for the appropriate response in each row)

	Yes	No	Maybe
An antlerless-only firearm hunt is held during the regular firearm deer season (requiring a permit acquired through the regular firearm permit draw).	1	2	3
An antlerless-only firearm hunt is held outside the regular firearm deer season (requiring a permit acquired through the regular firearm permit draw).	1	2	3
1-day, antlerless-only, standby deer permits costing \$5.00 are issued after 5am each morning at some Nature Preserves during the regular firearm deer season.	1	2	3
Regular archery season dates and regulations apply on Nature Preserves but only antlerless deer may be harvested.	1	2	3
Archery-only hunting for antlerless deer is allowed on Nature Preserves during the regular firearm season.	1	2	3
One archery permit allows you to harvest an unlimited number of antlerless deer on a Nature Preserve.	1	2	3
You are allowed to harvest a buck on a Nature Preserve, but only after you have harvested an antlerless deer at the site.	1	2	3

Section 3. Licenses, Permits, and Deer Check. Over the next several years, Illinois will establish an electronic licensing and permitting system. In addition, beginning in the fall of 2005, Illinois plans to implement a “remote” deer harvest reporting system that will replace the current system of check stations. Under the new system, hunters will report their deer harvest by telephone or internet (similar to the system now used for spring turkey hunting). IDNR personnel are working to make these transitions as smooth and quick as possible and are seeking hunter input in designing efficient and “hunter-friendly” systems. Please assist us in this process by answering the following questions.

1. How do you feel about the new deer harvest reporting system that will replace check stations?

_____ 1) Good _____ 2) Undecided _____ 3) Bad _____ 4) Don't care

2. Under the new deer harvest reporting system, hunters will report their harvest either over the internet or by telephone. Which method are you most likely to use to report your deer harvest?

_____ Over the internet _____ By telephone call

3. Under the new “remote” deer harvest reporting system, deer harvest pins would have to be distributed by mail to successful hunters. Considering that mail distribution will be difficult and expensive, please tell us how you feel about the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
DNR should stop issuing deer harvest pins to successful hunters	1	2	3	4	5
DNR should continue to provide deer pins to successful deer hunters even if it means cutting other wildlife programs	1	2	3	4	5
I would be willing to pay to receive an Illinois deer harvest pin	1	2	3	4	5

4. How do you feel about the upcoming electronic licensing and permit application system?

_____ 1) Good _____ 2) Undecided _____ 3) Bad _____ 4) Don't care

5. In the past couple years where have you typically purchased your Illinois hunting license (Check only one)?

_____ 1) at a DNR office _____ 3) at a local vendor
_____ 2) on the DNR internet website _____ 4) at a large vendor such as K-Mart or Wal-Mart

6. Under the proposed system, all deer and turkey permit applications will be submitted electronically either over the internet or at license vendors. Which method of application are you most likely to use?

_____ Apply over the Internet _____ Apply at a license vendor

7. Currently a non-resident combination archery permit costs \$226 and a non-resident firearm or muzzleloader-only permit costs \$200. How do you feel about increasing non-resident deer permit fees?

_____ Supportive _____ Unsupportive

8. How would you feel about increasing non-resident deer permit fees if other states responded by charging you more to deer hunt in their state?

_____ Supportive _____ Unsupportive

Section 4. Equipment. In recent years equipment regulations have changed, and technology, particularly of muzzleloaders and archery equipment, has advanced. Some hunters continue to pursue legalization of weapons not currently allowed. Please answer the following questions to give us your opinion on these issues.

1. Are you familiar with black powder cartridge rifles? _____ Yes _____ No

2. Do you own a black powder cartridge rifle? _____ Yes _____ No

3. Did you hunt with a handgun during the 2004-2005 regular firearm deer season?

_____ Yes _____ No

4. Do you support the use of handguns for deer hunting during the regular firearm deer season?

_____ Yes _____ No

5. In general, how supportive are you of technological advances in archery equipment?

_____ 1) Supportive _____ 2) Unsupportive _____ 3) No opinion

6. Please give your responses to the following statements regarding deer hunting equipment in Illinois by circling the number that matches your opinion.

Archery Equipment	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
I support the use of compound bows with greater than 65% letoff.	1	2	3	4	5
Archery hunters should be allowed to hunt during the regular firearm season.	1	2	3	4	5
Recent technological advances in archery equipment have diminished the sport.	1	2	3	4	5
Light projecting (laser) sights should be allowed for bow hunting in Illinois.	1	2	3	4	5
Use of mechanical broadheads should be restricted to hunters using bows that provide enough kinetic energy to make the broadhead function properly.	1	2	3	4	5
I support the use of compound bows with 80% or greater letoff.	1	2	3	4	5

Crossbows	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
Handicapped hunters are the only ones that should be allowed to use crossbows.	1	2	3	4	5
Crossbows should be legalized for archery deer hunting.	1	2	3	4	5
Crossbows should not be considered archery equipment.	1	2	3	4	5
Crossbow use should be allowed during the firearm deer season.	1	2	3	4	5
Crossbows should be legal for hunters 65 years of age or older.	1	2	3	4	5
Crossbows should be legal for youth archery hunters under 18 years of age.	1	2	3	4	5
Crossbow use should be allowed only for special hunts and/or in special hunt areas.	1	2	3	4	5
Firearms	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
“Smokeless” powders that can be used in modern muzzleloaders offer ballistic performance similar to modern rifles.	1	2	3	4	5
Modern rifles are too dangerous for deer hunting in Illinois.	1	2	3	4	5
Hunters in Illinois should be allowed to use black powder cartridge rifles to hunt deer during the regular firearm season.	1	2	3	4	5
Muzzleloader hunters should be allowed to use smokeless powder.	1	2	3	4	5
The muzzleloader-only season should be limited to “primitive” weapons with an external hammer, iron sights, and using patched round balls.	1	2	3	4	5
In-line muzzleloaders are more similar to modern rifles than to flintlock and percussion muzzleloaders.	1	2	3	4	5
Scopes should not be permitted during the muzzleloader-only deer season.	1	2	3	4	5

7. Do you do most of your deer hunting from an elevated stand or on the ground? (Circle the number for the appropriate response in each row)

	I mostly hunt from an elevated deer stand	I usually hunt on the ground
For firearm	1	2
For archery	1	2

8. How often do you use a safety belt or harness when hunting from a deer stand?

Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Always
1	2	3	4	5

9. Do you use trail cameras to scout your deer hunting areas?

_____ Yes _____ No

10. Do you take hand-held radios or a cell phone with you while deer hunting?

_____ Yes _____ No

Section 5. General Information. The following questions are important to help us understand more about the people involved in deer hunting in Illinois. Please tell us something about yourself by completing the following questions. All responses are kept confidential.

1. How many years have you hunted deer in Illinois? _____ Years

2. Did you deer hunt in another state during the 2004-2005 season?

_____ Yes - what state(s) 1) _____, 2) _____, 3) _____
_____ No

3. Do you collect Illinois deer harvest pins? _____ Yes _____ No

4. Do you or anyone in your household ever play computer or video deer hunting games?

_____ Yes _____ No

5. What is your county of residence? _____ County

6. What is your gender? _____ Male _____ Female

7. Please give your age as of January 16, 2005. _____ Years

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND ASSISTANCE!

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources receives federal assistance and therefore must comply with federal anti-discrimination laws. In compliance with the Illinois Human Rights Act, the Illinois Constitution, Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act as amended, and the U.S. Constitution, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, or disability. If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, please contact the Equal Employment Opportunity Officer, Department of Natural Resources, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271, (217) 782-7616 or the Officer of Human Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. 20240.